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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/08/2018
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SUBJECT: DELEGATION PRESENTS PETITION TO EMBASSY ADVOCATING
VISITATION RIGHTS FOR WIVES OF CONVICTED CUBAN SPIES

Classified By: Political Counselor Rick Mills
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) A four person delegation representing the "Cuba Solidarity Campaign," a UK-based pressure and advocacy group, presented a petition to Polcouns and the Department of Justice Attache October 7 on behalf of two Cuban women requesting permission to visit their imprisoned husbands, operatives of the Cuban intelligence service who have been convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage and members of the so-called "Miami Five." The delegates expressed "deep concern" about the purported "denial of visitation rights," which they claimed was a violation of "international standards" of human rights. They asserted that preventing one woman from seeing her husband for eight years and another from seeing her husband for ten years was sparking anti-U.S. sentiment in the UK and around the world. They also claimed that a visit would not harm U.S. national security, stating that "human rights organizations would chaperone the visit." Polcouns rebutted appropriately, stressing that one of the women was deported for espionage-related activity and the other was shown to be in training as a U.S.-based Cuban spy. He also reminded the delegates that the convicted Cubans have received numerous visits from family members, Cuban government officials and lawyers.

¶2. (C) The delegates stated that more than ten thousand people, including Nobel prize laureates and 112 MPs had signed the petition and that Amnesty International condemned the USG position. Len McCluskey, Assistant General Secretary of the UK's Unite the Union, an organization of trade unions, was the spokesperson for the delegation. The three other delegates were Rob Miller, Director of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, and representatives of U.S. unions (United Steel Workers and the Service Employees International Union).

¶3. (SBU) Following the meeting, the Embassy distributed a Press Notice summarizing the facts surrounding the conviction of the "Miami Five" and explaining the basis for denying visitation to the two wives. The Cuban Solidarity Campaign organized a 90 minute "vigil" outside the U.S. Embassy, which began at 6 p.m. local time October 7.

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LeBaron